Trudeau's checklist for first official visit to China
metroNEWS

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LOTTO 649

Toronto metro

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2016

High 26°C/Low 16°C Scattered thunderstorms

BACK-TO-SCHOOL
Lunches for the discerning palate
(Hint: It's not an apple)
metroLIFE

'A big part of who we are'

School aims to keep indigenous artistry alive among Toronto youth metroNEWS

Housing costs through the poorhouse roof

CRISIS

Hardest time in 25 years to afford a house in the city

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

Keeping a roof over your head making you feel like you're in the poorhouse?

You're not off track.

It's harder to afford a home in the city than at any point in the last 25 years, according to an RBC study released Tuesday.

The study tracked housing affordability through a measure that looks at the percentage of median household income being spent on mortgages, utilities and property taxes. The higher the number, the more people are being squeezed to afford their homes.

At about 60 per cent, the number is the highest it's been since around 1990 — right before a housing bubble burst in Toronto — and represents a 2 per cent increase in the last five years.

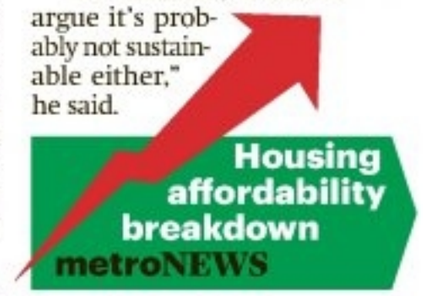
A lack of supply and overwhelming demand is driving the surge, said RBC senior economist Robert Hogue.

"The thing is people still want single detached homes," he said.

And, there simply aren't enough of them to go around.

Hogue said condos are still a "relatively affordable" option in the city, especially compared to Vancouver, where property values have gone up by 30 per cent in the last year.

"In Toronto, I would argue it's probably not sustainable either," he said.



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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

McDonald's introduces a healthier McNugget. **Business**

The price you pay to live in T.O.

Torontonians are devoting more and more of their incomes to housing, according to a new report from RBC. But housing affordability has ebbed and flowed over the years for a variety of reasons. These are some key moments in the (mostly) rise and fall.

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

1990

There was a lot of speculation in the in the market and that drove prices up, said RBC senior economist Robert Hogue. "Then the recession hit later in the year and this Toronto housing bubble burst. It was quite a difficult period and it took a long time to recover."

2008

Right before the global financial crisis it also got harder to afford a home in Toronto. Then the crash happened and the market cooled off a bit, causing a dip, Hogue said.

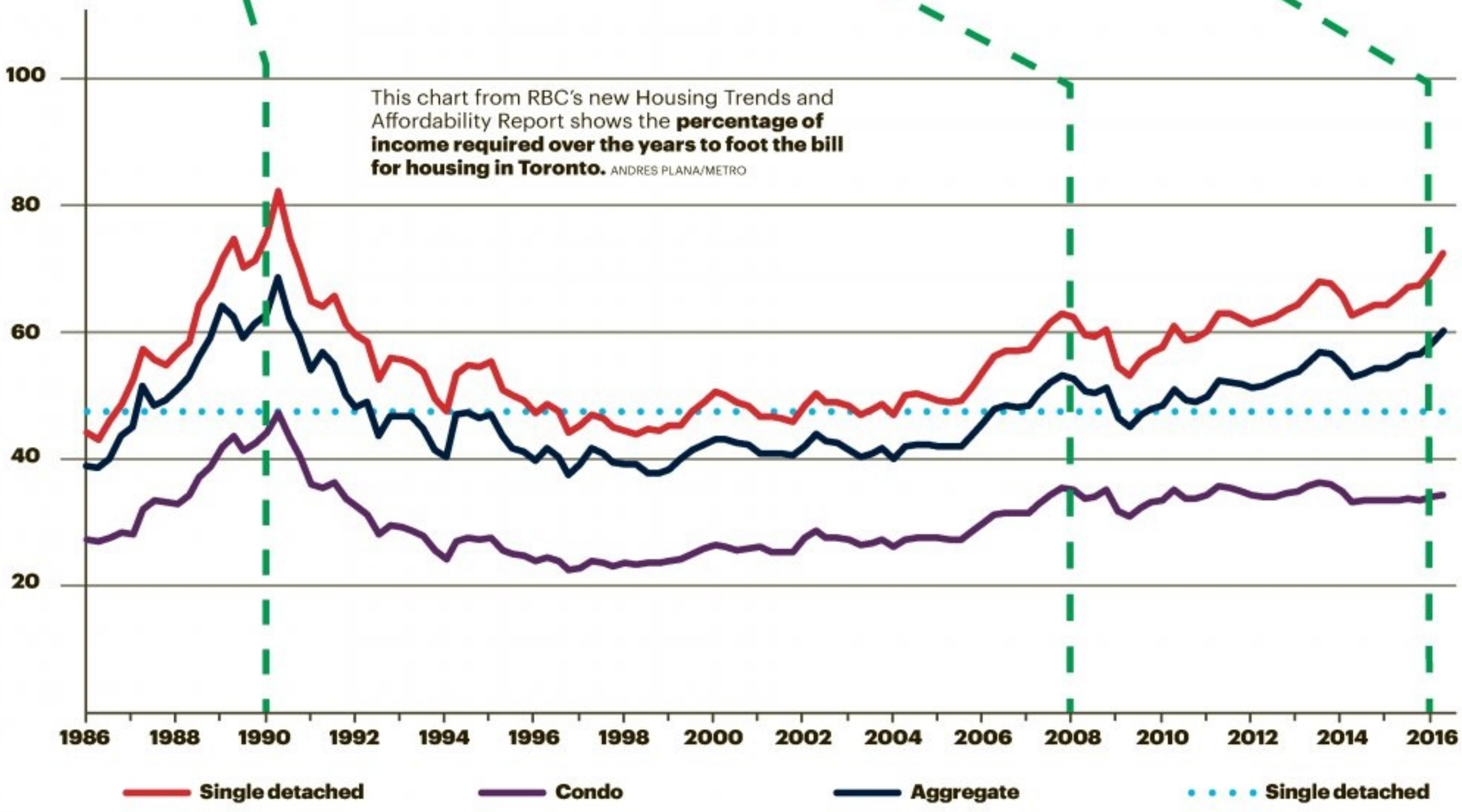
NOW

It's almost as hard to afford a home than in 1990, but with a bit of a difference: condos. "Condo prices continue to rise at this stage but no where near as much as with single detached homes," said Hogue.

THE FUTURE

No one really knows what will happen next. But, Hogue predicts, "prices will continue to rise probably quite briskly" with a bit of relief from some new construction projects next year and beyond.

This chart from RBC's new Housing Trends and Affordability Report shows the **percentage of income required over the years to foot the bill for housing in Toronto.** ANDRES PLANA/METRO



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Bicycles are a luxury, most of us use public transportation or walk. Never seen a bike rider obey traffic laws.
Sen. Nicole Eaton

Bloor bike backlash

TRANSPORTATION

Senator shuts down Twitter account after cycling rant

The Twitter account belonging to Senator Nicole Eaton was deactivated following backlash toward her rant against the new Bloor Street bike lanes.

"Can you imagine closing two lanes of Fifth Avenue to accommodate a few bicycle riders," she posted last Friday, referring to one of New York City's main roadways, which in fact has a bike lane stretching about 1.4 kilometres.

Eaton criticized the city for devoting funds to build bike lanes instead of other infrastructure priorities.

"Bicycles are a luxury, most of us use public transportation or walk," she wrote. "Never seen a bike rider obey traffic laws. They are special."

Earlier this month, she said Toronto was "such a mess" and resembled a "third world country" compared to New York City, London and Paris.

Eaton declined to comment when contacted by Torstar News Service.

Nicole Eaton CONTRIBUTED

Appointed by then-prime minister Stephen Harper, Eaton has served in the Senate since 2009, representing Ontario.

In 2014, she made headlines for comparing Justin Trudeau's lack of support for U.S.-led airstrikes in Iraq to his father's opposition to conscription during the Second World War.

"The apple does not fall far from the tree. PM Trudeau refused to fight the Nazis in WWII, Stayed home comfortably in Outremont," Eaton tweeted. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Media won't join Tory's sweaty subway ride, says mayor's office

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

Mayor John Tory has yet to set a date for his promised tropical trip on the Bloor line.

But, when he does, media won't be invited to ride along despite "an overwhelming" amount of attention the issue has garnered, his office said Tuesday.

"We're not doing this for a media circus, we're doing it because we should do it, and that's why we're keeping it private," spokeswoman Keerthana Kamalavasan told Metro.

Commuter Bianca Spence issued a Twitter challenge to Tory last week, asking that he ride Line 2 from Kennedy to Kipling stations in a subway car without air conditioning to get a first-hand look at the kind of extreme heat people are dealing with daily.

Tory accepted after Metro contacted his office about the tweet.

The Government isn't listening to you.

Their policy for plain packaging on cigarettes is being rushed through after a short Public Consultation that ends today. How much of a 'consultation' can that be if only 1 in 10 Canadians understand what it's about?

Does that seem right to you?
Check out BothSidesoftheArgument.ca

(Source: A Forum poll of 2,000 Canadians in August 2016) This is a JTI-Macdonald Corp. initiative.

GAMING

GTA regions compete to host casino

Casino fever is building again as Caesars and five other companies consider bidding to build gambling resorts in job-starved Rexdale and two sites in the east GTA.

Whichever company eventually wins Ontario Lottery and Gaming's bid process, big change is coming to Woodbine Racetrack, Ajax Downs track and Great Blue Heron charity casino on Scugog Island near Port Perry.

The chance to crack a market coveted by gaming companies, and build or partner on adjacent entertainment complexes, has triggered a frenzy of alliance-forging, deal-making and a fight between Ajax and Pickering.

Rexdale, Woodbine's northwest Etobicoke home, is hoping for a boom from the casino but has been disappointed before. A Baltimore developer in 2013 scrapped plans for Woodbine Live!, a massive shopping and entertainment complex.

Ward 1 Councillor Vince Crisanti is optimistic a casino will give his area the long-promised jobs and development it badly needs.

"The biggest jackpot in this vision for Woodbine is new jobs, revitalization, and economic opportunities for Etobicoke North and its residents," said Crisanti, who has tried to allay fears of gambling-related social ills.

To the east, Ajax Mayor Steve Parish is convinced a full casino with live table games, to replace slots at Ajax Downs, will trigger construction of an entertainment complex there, and he is determined it be in his town.

Neighbouring Pickering, however, is pushing hard to host the casino on more than 200 acres next to Highway 401 owned by the Apostolopoulos family, as part of a proposed mega-complex called Durham Live.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Frustrations about the commercialization of Pride were front and centre during the Night March in June, which saw people take to the streets and protest at Yonge-Dundas to call for change. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Pride needs reset: Groups

LGBTQ

Seek return to political roots, less focus on sponsorship

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Pride Toronto needs to go back to its traditional roots.

That was the main message from several people Tuesday as the organization launched a two-day consultation to plan for the future after a summer that drew fierce criticism and the executive director's resignation.

"Pride has become a global money-making event," said Brian De Matos, secretary of the steering committee at Queer Ontario. "We need to get back to the original roots of Pride and make it political again."

Some of Pride Toronto's former partners opted out of this summer's festivities due to problems that were brewing long before Black Lives Matter launched a protest during the parade, calling for better representation of minorities and fewer police.

Queer Ontario, a provincial group that advocates on behalf of LGBTQ rights, was among the groups that opted out of the parade, saying Pride Toronto is focusing too much attention on corporations that provide a lot of money instead of grassroots organizations.

"We need equal space for all folks. That's what inclusivity is about," said De Matos, adding there have been public consultations without much result before. "I hope we'll see real changes this time around."

Eliana Adlhoch-Shewell, a founding member of Grrrrl Justice, is also looking for more inclusion and called the Black Lives Matter demands "very legitimate."

Her group, focused on eliminating sexism and empowering women, also sat out this year's parade and is determined to do it again if things aren't done differently.

"There are so many marginalized groups that are left out of decisions made during Pride events," she said. "That has to change."

> **Pride has become a global money-making event. We need to get back to the original roots of Pride and make it political again.**
> Brian De Matos

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The Storyboot School has already led some workshops, teaching students about making traditional indigenous art. CONTRIBUTED

School aims to keep indigenous art alive

CULTURE

Students to start with making mukluks

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

A new school is launching with the aim of keeping indigenous artistry alive among Toronto's aboriginal youth.

Called Storyboot School, it will operate from the Bata Shoe Museum and offer weekly sessions. It starts next month with about 20 students already signed up to learn about making mukluks — soft traditional boots that are commonly worn by indigenous people, particularly the Inuit.

Future lessons are expected to include handiwork like jewelry-making and knitting.

School director Waneek Horn Miller said the growth of multi-generational indigenous families in urban areas means they're less in touch with their traditional roots.

"Culture used to be transmitted by watching grandmothers and aunties do things," she said. "This is a revitalization of our culture. We want our youth to have emotional ties with their traditions."

The school hopes to be more than just a place for youth to learn arts. By reconnecting indigenous youth to their culture, the school hopes to increase their level of confidence and courage to work towards greater goals in life.

The school also wants to encourage more interactions between aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth, an important aspect of the reconciliation process, Miller said.

As for starting with mukluks, it's important because they carry a big cultural significance in aboriginal communities. Not only did they keep people's feet warm, they also allowed hunters to move around quietly and quickly.

"You give mukluks to newborns and to couples getting married," Miller said. "You even bury your dead with a new pair of mukluks.

"It's a big part of who we are."

FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY CRACKDOWN

Immigrant groups worry rules not enough

Groups that advocate on behalf of immigrants are waiting anxiously to see how the provincial government's planned crackdown on abuse in the food service industry will help newcomers and temporary foreign workers.

But some are already concerned new regulations won't go far enough to help some of the most precarious workers in the sector.

Reforms must take into account experiences of racism and sexism documented by migrant workers and others like them. And, they must deal with the influential power restaurant employers have over their employees, said Syed Hussan, coordinator of Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, a Toronto group advocating for temporary foreign workers.

Right now, the government has said very little about the effort it plans to launch this fall and it's hard to assess what it could mean, he added. If it's all about enforcement, people will still be afraid to come with complaints for fear of reprisals, he said.

"We simply need rules that include everyone, regardless of their race, gender and status."

The alliance was among the first to sound the alarm about precarious conditions thousands of workers in the restaurant industry have been facing, from high turnover and employee abuse to overtime work without proper compensation and unjust layoffs. The government plan comes on the heels of a recent report that showed Ontario is facing problems when it comes to enforcing basic employment standards.

An overall review of labour laws was needed to offer better protection to precarious workers, the report concluded.

GILBERT NGABO/ METRO

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Beloved 'nan' caught in deadly crossfire

SHOOTING

Popular, loving 61-year-old was killed in Riverdale

Ma Peggy Ann Smith may have been a mother to three, a grandmother to 13 and a great-grandmother to one, but to an entire community, she was their "nan."

The 61-year-old was shot dead in Riverdale near Don Mount Court and Kintyre Avenue on Saturday around 6:15 p.m. while visiting her daughter and grandchildren. Toronto police released video surveillance footage on Tuesday showing two men fleeing the scene on foot. The suspects were last seen at Dundas and Hamilton Sts.

Peggy was also outside with her daughter and grandchildren when the shots rung out.

"She wasn't just my mom, she was a mom to a lot of others, grandmother to a lot of the children around here," daughter Loretta said tearfully, standing at her front porch on Tuesday. "She loved everybody. She touched everybody's heart around here."

Peggy Ann Smith holds great-grandson Tyson Atkinson in her arms. Smith, 61, was killed Saturday in the city's 48th homicide of the year. Police don't believe she was targeted. CONTRIBUTED

Smith's children were her lifeblood. Her three daughters all live in the same neighbourhood and Smith made sure to visit at every opportunity.

"She came down everyday. Even when she was sick, she'd come down," Loretta said. "She was there for everybody right until her dying day. My kids needed to go to the doctors, she took them. Every appointment, she took all her grandkids to the doctors. As old as we were, she would still come to our appointments. That's how much she was involved and loved her kids. We were just her life."

Smith's life was cut short when she was caught in crossfire police believe was intended for members of a group of about five men also standing outside.

"We are lucky that there weren't more injuries," said Homicide Det. David Dickinson at a Tuesday afternoon press conference. Dickinson has spoken to about half the members of that group, but does not know the names of the other two or three individuals. "The community as a whole has been very forthcoming with information," he said, but confirmed that the identities of the two or three other members of that group were not revealed by the first half of the group interviewed by police.

Smith would never leave her home without first reading the Bible each morning. She carried a list of names of people she'd pray for, including those in her life and those who had passed away.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

POLICE CNE SHUT DOWN AFTER FIGHTS BREAK OUT
The Canadian National Exhibition shut down Tuesday night after fights broke out on the grounds, police said. No arrests were reported. Police were initially called for reports of gunshots, which they later said were unconfirmed. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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CRIME

Victims of crossbow killing were family of the accused

The victims of last week's triple homicide in Scarborough have been identified as the mother and two brothers of the accused, Brett Ryan, who is facing three counts of first-degree murder.

Susan Ryan, 66, Christopher Ryan, 42, and Alexander Ryan, 29, were killed in a midday attack involving a crossbow on Thursday — though Toronto police revealed Monday that Susan died of strangulation.

A court-ordered publication ban on the names of the victims had been in place since Friday, when Brett Ryan, 35, made his first court appearance 24 hours after the grisly discovery by police of three bodies outside the family home on Lawndale Road.

Neither the Crown lawyer Dihim Emami nor the Justice of the Peace Grace Lau provided any rationale for the unusual decision to ban the publication of the names of the homicide victims. The Star and other media successfully fought to have the ban lifted at a Scarborough court Tuesday morning.

Toronto police confirmed Tuesday that the three victims and the accused are relatives. Neighbour Warren Dalton said there is a fourth son in the family, and that two of the sons lived in the home where the attacks occurred. Property records show the home was purchased by Susan and William Ryan.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Trudeau's China trip all about the economy

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In first official visit, PM must get down to business

When Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited Washington D.C. for a state dinner, his job was to dazzle. But on his first official visit to China as prime minister, Trudeau must get right down to business.

Where is he visiting?

After landing in Beijing around midnight on Tuesday, Trudeau plans to visit Shanghai, Hangzhou and Hong Kong before departing on Sept. 7.

Who's travelling with him?

The prime minister is bringing his wife, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, and seven-year-old daughter Ella Grace. Cabinet members Finance Minister Bill Morneau, Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion and International Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland will also join him.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his wife Sophie Grégoire Trudeau and daughter Ella-Grace arrive in Beijing on Tuesday. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

What does he hope to accomplish?

1. G20: Trudeau will attend the G20 summit in Hangzhou, where he will meet with finance ministers and leaders from all around the world to discuss the globalized economy.
2. Free trade: A free-trade deal with China, Canada's second-largest trading partner, would be a big get for Trudeau's government.
3. Canola: Recent restrictions on the amount of foreign material, such as weeds and other crops, in Canada's canola exports could mean big losses for farmers. China buys 87 per cent of its canola from Canada, and is asking producers to cut the level of foreign material in deliveries by more than half for health and safety reasons by this Thursday.
4. Spies: Trudeau is expected to bring up Kevin Garratt, a Canadian missionary who was charged with espionage last January and is held in prison in China.
5. Human rights: While many would like to see Trudeau take a stand against China's human-rights record, it's a touchy subject and one that will be difficult for him to broach while negotiating economic issues.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

AFGHANISTAN

Canadian and his wife plead for lives

A Canadian and his American wife have appeared in a new video pleading for their lives.

Joshua Boyle and Caitlan Coleman were kidnapped by the Taliban in 2012 while on a backpacking trip in the mountains of Afghanistan.

In the video shared by SITE Intelligence group Boyle, 33, and Coleman, 31, say that if the Afghan government doesn't stop executing Taliban prisoners, their captors will kill them and other prisoners.

"They will execute us, women and children included, if the policies of the Afghan government are not overturned either by the Afghan government or by Canada somehow, or United States," Boyle says.

In May, the Afghan government hanged six inmates linked to the Taliban. Coleman was pregnant when the couple was kidnapped in 2012. In November her parents received a letter telling of how she'd given birth to a second child while being held in captivity.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Joshua Boyle and his wife Caitlan Coleman. SCREENGRAB

MILITARY

Sexual misconduct punished

The Canadian Armed Forces says it is making progress in the fight against sexual misconduct in the ranks, but much more work needs to be done.

In an update Tuesday, the military said it completed 51 investigations into inappropriate sexual behavior between April and July.

As a result, 30 people had received "career-impacting" punishments ranging from fines to outright dismissal from the forces. Three more were referred to civilian authorities while the perpetrators in four cases could not be identified.

Ten cases were considered unfounded.

Defence chief Gen. Jonathan Vance, who has made the elimination of sexual misconduct a priority, described the results as a "good start." But Vance acknowledged much work remains to be done. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Thousands buried in Daesh mass graves

TERRORISM

Number of victims ranges from 5,200 to over 15,000

Peering through binoculars, the young man watched as Daesh extremists gunned down the handcuffed men and then buried them with a waiting bulldozer. For six days he watched as Daesh filled one grave after another with his friends and neighbours.

The five graves arranged at the foot of Sinjar Mountain hold the bodies of dozens of minority Yazidis killed in Daesh's bloody onslaught in August 2014. They are a fraction of the mass graves Daesh extremists have scattered across Iraq and Syria.

Through interviews, photos and research, The Associated Press has documented and mapped 72 of the mass graves, with many more expected to be uncovered as Daesh's territory shrinks. In Syria, The Associated Press has obtained locations for 17 mass graves, including one with the bodies of hundreds of members of a single tribe all but exterminated when Daesh extremists took over their region.

For at least 16 of the Iraqi graves, most in territory too dangerous to excavate, officials do not even guess the number of dead. In others, the estimates are based on memories of traumatized survivors, Daesh propaganda and what can be gleaned from a cursory look at the earth. Still, even the known numbers of victims buried are staggering — from 5,200 to more than 15,000.

On Sinjar Mountain, Rasho Qassim drives daily past the mass grave that holds the bodies of his two sons. The sites are roped off and awaiting the money and the political will for excavation.

"We want to take them out of here. There are only bones left. But they said 'No, they have to stay there, a committee will come and exhume them later,'" said Qassim. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kurdish Peshmerga forces inspect a site marked with a sign reading "Kurdish mass grave" in Iraq in 2014. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FRANCE

Burkini ban a 'stupid reaction': UN official

The United Nations human rights office says local bans in France on burkini swimwear amount to "a grave and illegal breach of fundamental freedoms" and a "stupid reaction" to recent extremist attacks.

OHCHR spokesman Rupert Colville says the rights agency wants local officials to "immediately" lift the bans, saying they don't increase security.

A French high court has struck down on French towns' ban on the burkini, effectively invalidating such bans in about 30 towns, though many remain.

Colville says such bans "fuel religious intolerance and the stigmatization of Muslims," and "have only succeeded in increasing tensions."

In Cannes, a French court has overturned a ban on burkinis.

Colville said people who wear burkinis or any another clothing "cannot be blamed for the violent or hostile reactions of others."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

POLITICS

Clinton's Benghazi emails recovered

The U.S. State Department says about 30 emails that may be related to the 2012 attack on U.S. compounds in Benghazi, Libya, are among thousands of Hillary Clinton emails recovered during the FBI's recent investigation into her use of a private server.

Government lawyers told U.S. District Court Judge Amit P. Mehta Tuesday that an undetermined number of the emails among the 30 were not included in the 55,000 pages previously provided by Clinton. The State Department said it would need until the end of September to review the emails and redact classified information before they are released. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ISTOCK

Michelle Williams

With the volatility of the market and low returns on many investments, how does an investor decide which way to go? "A lot depends on your risk tolerance and your time horizon," explains Ron Dale, partner at Bongard Dale Fried Chartered Accountants. If you err on the side of caution, here's Dale's rundown of products for investors like you:

Guaranteed investment certificates are a popular choice for those who want to avoid risk. GICs offer a guaranteed rate of return over a fixed period. The rate will vary depending on the length of the term and interest rates at the time of purchase. "Locking in gives you slow, steady growth, but works to your disadvantage if the market improves," says Dale.

High-interest savings accounts (HISAs) are savings accounts with competitive interest rates, and you can withdraw funds without penalty. The interest is calculated daily. "HISAs often come with bank fees and minimums, but they're great for investors looking for flexibility."

Canada Savings Bonds are guaranteed and very safe, but "the interest is extremely low, even over a longer term, which makes it a less popular choice than it was in the past."

It doesn't pay to be too cautious, however. Ultimately, Dale believes for most investors, the most effective approach is a combination of lower risk/reward and higher risk/reward options, focusing on your comfort with risk and how quickly you need to grow your investment.

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ISTOCK

Higher risk, higher return

You're an investor who prefers risk and reward, and you're looking for the payoff. Buckle up

Michelle Williams

Looking for that quick return? Despite the volatility of the market and low return on many investments, some investors insist on taking bold risks that can lead to tidy returns. It's all about risk tolerance and timing, according to Ron Dale, partner at Bongard Dale Fried Chartered Accountants. Here's Dale's rundown of products for those who are willing to take some risks:

Penny stocks can be purchased for literally pennies a share, but usually the expectation is that the share will grow exponentially over a relatively short period of time. "Investing in stocks like this can give you quick results, but they're usually high risk," says Dale.

A second mortgage can provide low-interest cash for investment — but you may not have enough equity if the market diminishes and you could default on your mortgage payment.

Flipping real estate, on the other hand, may look easy on television, but it's harder than it appears and is often "a risky way to turn a profit."

Ultimately, exercising some degree of caution is wise.

Business ventures often start with someone approaching you about an idea to make some quick money by investing in a product or service. "Typically you get high interest for your loan, but it's unsecured," so there's potential to make money but also to lose everything if the venture goes bad.

Ultimately, exercising some degree of caution is wise. Dale believes for most investors, the best bet is a combination of low risk and high risk investments, depending on your timeline and how comfortable you are with risk.

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CONTRACT TALKS

Canada Post, postal union reach deals

Labour Minister MaryAnn Mihychuk says Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers have reached tentative agreements, averting the prospect of a labour dispute that has loomed over the talks for months. In a statement, Mihychuk says the agreements were reached "voluntarily," but provides no other details about the deals themselves.

The issue of differences in paycheques for rural mail carriers — most of whom are women — and urban letter carriers had been at the forefront of protracted contract talks between the two sides.

The negotiations were extended twice since the weekend, when a deadline expired on a 72-hour job action notice issued last Thursday by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

The two sides were in talks nearly around the clock at the request of a special mediator appointed Friday by Mihychuk.

Canada Post described the tentative agreements as short-term. It said they are for two years and that four-year contracts were typically negotiated in the past. The tentative agreements, however, still must be ratified by the members.

"The agreements will avert a work disruption, bringing much-needed certainty in the postal system for our employees and customers," said Canada Post in a statement. "Canadians can now use the postal system with confidence."

The tentative settlement came the same day that calls for direct federal government action had grown louder. A group of prominent women from across the country called on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to direct the Crown corporation to live up to its legal obligations on pay equity.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nicola Pitman, director of menu management at McDonald's Canada, shows their new, healthier McNuggets made in a test kitchen at McDonald's headquarters. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

McNuggets quietly turn McHealthier

McDONALD'S

Mac & Cheese, Hamburger Helper made similar moves

It's a McNugget mystery of sorts — the ultimate blind taste test that has kept Mickey-D fans in the dark.

The world's largest hamburger chain did a recipe reboot of its most kid-friendly food. It's now lower in calories and sodium, and McDonald's Canada introduced it — quietly — a month ago.

If you've eaten the mega-popular chicken treat in August then you've probably already tried the new version, which is free of artificial preservatives and minus the chicken skin that the giant chain used for flavour and binding.

But if it's a McHealthier move that will especially please parents, why not shout it from the rooftops of the Golden Arches? "I think people know we are doing lots with our menu," said Nicola Pitman, director of menu management at McDonald's Canada.

Established fast food chains have been scrambling to step up the image of their food amid stiff competition from smaller rivals promising wholesome alternatives. Kraft Heinz successfully made a similar move when it announced last March that it had quietly stripped its signature Mac & Cheese dinners of artificial flavours, preservatives and dyes three months earlier from the 79-year-old neon orange noodles — and virtually no one noticed.

Others, such as, General Mills have also made stealth moves (they quietly reduced sodium content in Hamburger Helper over six years to 2014) which observers say is intended to combat consumer perceptions that tinkering with a classic recipe would hurt the taste — à la the disastrous New Coke. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
in Vancouver

The cost of buying a home in Vancouver grabs most of the headlines, but it's an equally dog-eat-dog world out there for renters.

Rosemary is in Vancouver all week, reporting on the major issues facing the city. Today: housing.

It is, in the context of Vancouver's mad open houses of late, a tame event. A half-dozen rental hunters, a modest one-bedroom suite for $1,300 in the city's Mount Pleasant neighbourhood, with a closet-sized kitchen from the 1970s and plenty of natural light.

Not, notes the property manager, the typical showing.

"My vacancy is near zero. When I put an ad out, I get 80 responses," he tells the small group I've joined (strictly, thank God, in an observer's capacity), in a borderline brag.

Like we need the reminder. The cost of buying a home in Vancouver grabs most of the headlines, but it's an equally dog-eat-dog world out there for renters. "It's insane," one woman at the open house tells me. She saw a place at 9 p.m. one night last week, and it was rented by 8 a.m. the next morning. Some landlords expect thousands of dollars in rent on the spot. One apartment she looked at had jumped from $800 a month to $1,300 a month in two years.

Another woman had been away from the city for a year, only to return to the skyrocketing rent prices. "I came home, and I was like, 'What the hell happened?'"

There's no time to make a decision, the first woman adds, but you want to make sure you like the place you choose, because God forbid you have to move out any time soon and face another surge in rent.

If I had to place my sympathies with cash-strapped landlords or cash-strapped renters, I'd find it an easy choice

As a result of all this, the property manager — a soft spoken but chatty man who's been in the business for decades — says he's fielding applications for some high-priced condos from the highly unqualified, who are hoping to carry a $2,500 monthly rent with a student loan. "People are applying who can't afford it. What are you doing here? You can't afford this!" he says.

SO MANY UNITS, SO FEW VACANCIES The Vancouver rental market is the forgotten real estate disaster in a city full of them. METRO FILE

Then, among the more qualified, there's the pressure to pay above-market prices. One Metro colleague spent weeks searching via open houses with dozens of other renters, a.k.a. competitors (he even found himself relieved that one man with a cane would probably be cut from the list). His "happy" ending: He now pays 30 per cent more in rent than he used to, and that's after he was forced to fork over his first payment a month early, to secure the lease (he's also renting out his old place on Airbnb to cover his increased monthly expenses).

The story is the same in Victoria. One friend witnessed a guy "who took a zillion applications at an open house and then let the final chosen ones price-bid each other. Makes me want to barf."

From another renter's point of view: "Victoria is rife with opportunistic scum."

"I listed my condo in Victoria this month and got over 100 emails," noted another friend and Victoria landlord. "The market is insane,"

There's even a Nanaimo rental crunch, and the story of a woman who had to resort to Airbnb listings to find a long-term rental.

Meanwhile, as my colleague Wanyee Li reports today, some are buying condos especially to rent them out on Airbnb. One former condo owner told Metro that she was shocked to find her old unit, which she had sold weeks earlier, listed on Airbnb by someone who had a dozen other properties.

But the chatty property manager at this showing would likely be unsurprised about such a hustle. With all the costs that go along with being a landlord, he says, including unexpected expenses for new building regulations and rising property taxes, with only a fixed 3 or 4 per cent annual rent increase allowed, "you're not making a profit. That's a fact."

"(Rent control is) limiting the revenue, and your expenses are going up. So what do people do? They dump the property.

"Ten or 15 years ago, there was a lot more vacancies downtown because people were buying condos," he added. Now those once potential buyers have become reluctant renters, pushing up demand, prices, and the sense of desperation.

"Tenants have a sense of entitlement: I deserve to only pay this much rent," he says. "That's kind of what it is,"

Some, perhaps. Many would just like rent to cost the 30 per cent of income that affordability experts tell us it should. And while some rents might not be keeping up with the property taxes, neither are many people's incomes. Landlords might feel stuck by leases, but renters feel stuck with few options. And while being a landlord is a choice, finding a place to live? Not so much. Which is why, if I had to place my sympathies with cash-strapped landlords or cash-strapped renters, I'd find it an easy choice.

The women at the open house agree affordability is a pipe dream, and they — like everyone else — take a three-page rental application. The stove might hail from the disco era, but the bathroom is new, and there's new wall-to-wall carpet, plus a balcony (next to the dumpster). All in all, for Vancouver, not too shabby.

Tomorrow: Lessons from the front lines of the fentanyl crisis

Return to peacekeeping won't be return to '90s

Paul Wells

Harjit Sajjan's office offered me an interview with the defence minister. This was more than a week ago now, after Sajjan landed in Vancouver from a week-long visit to Africa. And if you want the truth of it I sat on the interview for days because I wasn't entirely sure what to make of it.

After our conversation, Sajjan and two other ministers announced Canada will contribute 600 soldiers and $450 million over three years to United Nations peacekeeping. The sound of self-congratulation from some corners has been hearty. But a lot of what Sajjan told me stands as a useful corrective.

Please stow the noble image of blue-helmeted soldiers, sternly guarding a neat line between two carefully separated armies somewhere. Those days are gone and they are not coming back.

"This is not the peacekeeping of the past," Sajjan told me. "There's no peace to keep."

Traditional peacekeeping was a relic of 19th- and early 20th-century industrial war, when massed armies would hurl themselves at one another in ways that actually made them relatively easy to separate. Latter-day asymmetric combat, led in many cases by ragtag groups of militants armed with a few trucks and sidearms, follows no neat lines. Civilian and paramilitary groups intermingle, as do friendly and unfriendly armies. Allegiances shift. It's hard to even know where to send the blue helmets.

Sajjan and his colleagues need to make up a new way for Canadians to be helpful in Africa. That's the work he was pursuing when he visited Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Congo and Uganda. "This trip was about getting the direct facts," he said. "Because you need to get a really good, deep understanding of what's really going on."

Great. Going on where? Africa is three times the size of Canada, with more than 30 times its population.

"I've been quite honest about my approach on this," Sajjan said. "Just because I visit an area doesn't mean we're going to be contributing troops (there). And just because I didn't visit an area doesn't mean we're not going to be contributing troops."

So: Canada is sending up to 600 soldiers, plus some number of civilians, to provide expertise and services. Sajjan just doesn't know where yet.

This makes more sense than it seems to. In 2001, it was clear where Canadian troops were going: Afghanistan. They then spent a decade learning the regional politics and the infernally complex tribal sociology that affected soldiers' work every day. Sajjan wants to front-load the homework, and pick a mission later.

Sajjan's agenda may offer hints. Four of the countries he visited are big donors to UN peace operations. Uganda has about as many soldiers in the field as Canada is offering, Ethiopia 14 times as many. But the Democratic Republic of Congo has fielded only 20. But a UN force of 20,000 has been stationed in the DRC since 2010. It's a tricky business. All told, 102 soldiers have been killed in that operation.

Let's hold off on the self-congratulation until we know what our soldiers are getting into.

Paul Wells is a national politics columnist for the Toronto Star.

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Canadian IndyCar driver James Hinchcliffe is taking a spin on Dancing with the Stars

1 Chickpea, feta and tomato salad — This Martha Stewart recipe hits all the marks of a good school lunch: Protein, healthy fats and no nuts.

2 Cumin-spiced tofu tacos — Torstar life editor Mary Vallis swears her daughter scarfs these tacos down.

3 Mini quiches — Ottawa dad Craig Stewart uses quiche as a solution to sandwich ennui. Use frozen pre-made tart crusts for an easy, make-ahead lunch.

Tried and tested school lunches

RECIPES

Sandwiches get old quick — here, some ideas to inspire

Short of telling your kid, "Eat what I make or else starve," there are ways to fuel them for the day with help from dietitians who have seen countless children of different appetites, as well as parents with go-to recipes that their kids devour when it's time for them to head back to school next week.

One of the best ways to broaden a child's horizons is to simply get the kids involved in making their lunches.

"It's not even the meal prep, it goes all the way to the grocery shopping and planning your meal" says Richmond Hill, Ont.-based registered dietitian Mahsa Esmaeili. "When they're involved, no matter what they're preparing they're more likely to eat it."

One mom from the Facebook group Bento Lunch Box Ideas-Canada told me she makes her own buns using a bread machine and her kids choose the fillings whether it's zucchini and chicken, or most recently, ham and egg. She says it gives the kids a sense of pride in having a say in their creations.

If kids don't like sandwiches, switch the vessel. Once a month, Ottawa dad Craig Stewart bakes a large batch of mini-quiches for his twin 13-year-old daughters.

"I've done spinach, ham, mushroom, asparagus, sautéed onion, peppers, leftover roast chicken, different cheeses, basil, chives. It's anything you think your kids will like or if you want to sneak some stuff in there, they tend to eat it," he says. To serve, he takes a few quiches out of the freezer and throws them into his daughters' lunch bags with an ice pack.

"You also want to incorporate different flavours, textures and colours," says Esmaeili.

"If you're used to packing baby carrots, it can get boring. If it's fruit, add something soft one day, then crunchy the next ... Kids like dipping things so if you have a healthy dip like hummus or a yogurt-based dip, it makes all the difference."

Spices and herbs are also an important component in introducing new foods to children. Depending on the family's cultural background, many parents already have their kids salivating for sweet curries, fragrant jollof rice, zesty tzatziki and tangy kimchi at an early age.

However, if that's not the case, registered dietitian Nicole Osinga would start with sweeter flavours like a sprinkle of cinnamon on apples or chopped basil in salads.

"It's important that kids try them at home first, so you know they'll like them before you send them off with the lunch," says Osinga, who works in Durham Region. She also adds that having a diverse classroom exposes kids to the cuisines of other cultures.

"Ask them what their friends ate for lunch and try making it at home. See if they'll be open to trying it."

Mini quiches

This recipe comes courtesy of Craig Stewart, an Ottawa father of two. Find boxes of pre-made tart crusts in the frozen section of the supermarket (Tenderflake is the most common brand). Use the egg and milk mixture as the base and substitute with fillings of your choice.

Ingredients:

- 4-5 strips of bacon
- 24 frozen mini tart shells
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups (500 mL) milk
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) finely chopped broccoli
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 cup (250 mL) shredded old cheddar

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375F

2. Arrange tart shells on a lined baking sheet. Set aside.

3. In a skillet over medium-high heat, fry bacon until browned and crispy. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature on a plate lined with paper towel. Chop bacon into small pieces.

4. In a mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, bacon and broccoli. Season with salt and pepper.

5. Carefully pour egg mixture into tart shells until full but not overflowing. Sprinkle cheddar on top of each tart. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until cheese is bubbly and eggs are set.

6. Let cool for five minutes before serving or let cool to room temperature before freezing up to 3 months.

Chickpea, feta and tomato salad

This Martha Stewart salad recipe is recommended by Toronto legal assistant Vanessa Medina. She doesn't have any kids herself, but she does make larger batches of this for her coworkers and it checks off all the marks of a good school lunch: protein, healthy fats, a hint of spice, no nuts and can be made a day or two in advance.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup (60 mL) canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) crumbled feta
- 1 tbsp. (15 mL) lemon juice
- 2 tsp (10 mL) olive oil
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) Italian seasoning or dried oregano
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients in a bowl until well incorporated. Pack in a reusable food container and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Cumin-spiced tofu tacos

This recipe comes courtesy of Torstar Life editor Mary Vallis who for months now has been swearing that her daughter scarfs these down every time. Make this tofu mix ahead of time and use as much as you need to for the tacos.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp (15 mL) olive oil
- 1 350g-brick extra firm tofu, drained and crumbled
- 2 tsp (10 mL) ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) chili powder, or more to taste
- 1 cup (250 mL) canned black or kidney beans, drained and rinse
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) fresh or frozen corn kernels
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Grated old cheddar, to taste
- 8 hard or soft taco shells

Directions:

1. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add tofu, cumin and chili. Sauté until tofu starts to turn golden brown. Add beans and corn. Continue to cook until corn starts to brown. Add salt and pepper to taste. Adjust seasoning as needed (ask your child for input). Remove from heat and transfer to plastic food container. Let flavours marinate for 10 minutes. If not using immediately, let cool to room temperature before refrigerating for up to a week.

2. To make tacos, fill each taco shell with about 1/2 cup tofu filling. Wrap tightly with plastic wrap and store in a hard plastic food container.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

How bias keeps women out of the science field

'We've been very selfish': Young scientists who spend a decade or more in training provide cheap labour for researchers, but many are being priced out of Ph.D.s, said Jim Woodgett, director of research at Toronto's Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute. CONTRIBUTED

DIVERSITY

Training takes too long, shuts out youth, top biologist says

Genna Buck
Metro Canada

Jim Woodgett, director of research at Toronto's Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute and one of Canada's leading cell biologists, is fed up with the patchwork system of awarding funding grants for scientific research.

He says it leaves scientists lurching from project to project, not able to rely on steady work or take advantage of "serendipitous" discoveries — scientific lucky breaks — whose applications may not be obvious until years later.

His new manifesto, published on Medium.com, outlines how he thinks society as a whole — and funding agencies in particular — can "protect and nurture the best and most promising science and scientists" in Canada. This comes at the beginning of an independent review of the way the federal government funds fundamental science. He spoke to Metro about his call to action.

You want the scientific funding system to promote diversity. How could that be done in a fair way?
I think we're being unfair right now. Where's the scientific rationale if, when five female and five male scientists applying for funding, you don't get equal success rates for both? If not, there's something wrong. Among our students, about 65 per cent are female. Postdocs, it's about 50/50. Junior professors, it starts to drop so there are more males than females. Among professors, it's more like 70/30. Likewise with junior scientists. If 20 per cent of applicants are junior scientists, then 20 per cent of grants awarded should go to junior scientists. If not, what's going to happen when older scientists have retired?

We need to even the playing field. The U.S. National Institute of Health has adjusted its grant competition system to make sure the people successfully getting grants look like the people applying for grants. **What's the practical benefit of having gender balance?** If there isn't a gender balance, that probably means very talented women are not doing science. It doesn't maximize our intellectual abilities as a nation. I think a lot of that is unconscious bias.

You believe becoming a scientist takes too long. What's the problem with that?
We used to put people through quicker. Thirty years ago, my Ph.D. took three years and I did three years of postdoctoral studies. Nowadays it takes five to seven years to do a Ph.D. and five to seven years to do a postdoc. Do they really come out as better scientists? I don't think that's the case.

I say this as somebody who has contributed to the problem: We've made a cheaper workforce in science, because the students take longer. This is especially a problem in cities like Toronto and Vancouver. We pay $25,000 or $30,000. There are a lot of students who can't afford to do their Ph.D. Your income and your family's ability to support you has no relationship to your intellectual capacity. If we really want the best people to be doing science, we should be reducing the barriers.

You wrote that some of the most important recent discoveries didn't have a clear application at the time. How do you think the science funding system can capture that value?
The dirty truth is a lot of major findings that have a huge impact are serendipitous, they're not planned. If you look at an application for funding for something that is totally off-the-wall, it's not going to get funded. So people ask for funding for things that are straightforward. Then they get distracted from the original plan. That's essential.

The funding agencies want to be predictable, they want to hold people accountable. But (they shouldn't) force scientists to do what they say they're going to do. That's how you crush novelty.

MANIFESTO

Researcher Jim Woodgett wrote a nine-point plan for how Canada can promote science and train better scientists. Here are a few of his ideas:

- **Merge federal systems for funding science**. There are at least 20 different government programs for health research alone.
- **Support a base level of funding for scientists** instead of having them rely on grants. It shouldn't be determined by oversimplified measures like the number of papers published.
- **Support smaller centres**, outside of bit cities, through partnerships with major research institutions that get the lion's share of funding.

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METROLINX

Standoff with Chris Brown ends peacefully

LEGAL TROUBLE

L.A. police had responded to woman's call for help

Singer Chris Brown came out of his Los Angeles home peacefully Tuesday after an hours-long standoff with police who responded to a woman's call for help.

Police Lt. Chris Ramirez said several people were escorted from the residence after a search warrant was served.

No arrests had been made and everyone has been co-operative, he said.

Police said the woman who made the call for help at about 3 a.m. was not inside the hilltop estate in the San Fernando Valley. Ramirez did not identify the woman or elaborate on the assistance she needed. He did not know if she was injured.

Brown's attorney Mark Geragos arrived at the home shortly before the warrant was served.

Chris Brown has been in repeated legal trouble since 2009.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earlier, Brown posted several videos to social media declaring his innocence.

The singer has been in repeated legal trouble since his felony conviction in the 2009 assault of his then-girlfriend, Rihanna.

"I don't care. Y'all gonna stop playing with me like I'm the villain out here, like I'm going crazy," he said in one Instagram video Tuesday, waving a cigarette and looking at the camera.

"When you get the warrant or whatever you need to do, you're going to walk right up in here and you're going to see nothing. You idiots."

Calls and emails seeking comments from Geragos and other representatives were not returned Tuesday.

After several missteps, Brown completed his probation last year in the case involving Rihanna.

In 2013, Brown struck a man outside a Washington, D.C., hotel and was charged with misdemeanour assault. The singer was ordered into rehab but was dismissed from the facility for violating its rules.

He spent 2 1/2 months in custody, with U.S. marshals shuttling him between Los Angeles and the nation's capital for court hearings.

In another incident while in treatment, Brown was accused of throwing a brick at his mother's car following a counselling session. It came after Brown had completed court-ordered anger management classes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

What we do while we're waiting for The One

THE SHOW: Lovesick, Season 1, Episode 2 (Netflix)
THE MOMENT: The downside of love

Sensitive guy Dylan (Johnny Flynn) is cooking dinner to impress Anna and Cleo. Cleo is dating Luke (Daniel Ings), Dylan's playboy flatmate, but he's trying to keep her at a distance. Evie (Antonia Thomas), their other flatmate, watches, amused.

"Why invite Cleo?" Luke asks. "It's Judas territory, is what it is."

"Anna wanted her to come," Dylan says.

"Well, Cleo wants to see my bedroom and draw conclusions about my personality," Luke says. "That's why I've worked really hard to keep her away from here."

"Did you ever think Cleo might like you if she got to know you?" Evie asks.

"Yeah, I've considered it, and it's definitely a no," Luke replies. "But now she's coming, and there's going to be... conversation." He shudders.

This clever British series has a great premise: In the present, Dylan's getting in touch, alphabetically, with the women he's slept with over the last 11 years. Each episode focuses on a different woman, and bounces around in time as we see the relationship in flashback.

Also in the present, Dylan and Evie are in love, but don't admit it.

Show creator Tom Edge pulls off a neat trick: He's made a series about failed relationships that manages to be melancholic, yet hopeful and romantic. "Only one can be the one," Dylan says. This series is about what we do while we're waiting.

It's a story that could unfurl for years, so it's surprising there's only been one, six-episode arc — or that it hasn't been remade in the U.S.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

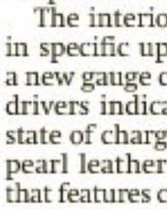
metro WHEELS
Your essential daily news
Lotus Elise 250 Special Edition Celebrates 50 Years in Hethel, England

A plug-in with plenty of power

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

REVIEW

Impressive range alone makes this car worth it



Sami Haj-Assaad
AutoGuide.com

Hyundai's first plug-in vehicle is not a pet project or a limited-run experiment; it's a fully fleshed out evolution of the traditional hybrid Sonata that offers an eye-popping 966 kilometres of range.

And while the Sonata Plug-in Hybrid is still based on Hyundai's tried-and-true mid-sized sedan and not built from the ground up like the Volt and Prius, the Korean automaker still manages to make its green vehicle stand out.

Getting the basics out of the way, the Sonata Plug-in Hybrid looks nearly identical to its non-plug-in counterpart, save a few updates. There's also a unique alloy wheel design, and plug-in Hybrids are available in four exclusive colors: Pewter Gray Metallic, Diamond White Pearl, Eclipse Black and Seaport Mist.

The interior also gets Plug-in specific updates, including a new gauge cluster that helps drivers indicate the battery's state of charge. There's a blue pearl leather interior option that features contrasting stitching, too.

The biggest and most important change to the car's interior is a button that changes how the Plug-in prioritizes how it saves fuel. A hybrid mode uses the gas and battery mode together, while an EV mode puts priority on utilizing the electric motor to its fullest and depleting the big battery before firing up the internal combustion engine. A third mode uses the internal combustion engine like a generator to charge the battery and can be activated by holding the HEV button. In addition to the different drivetrain modes, there's a drive mode selector that modifies the steering and responsiveness of the car.

Unlike the normal Sonata Hybrid, there is no Sport mode, which is fine because the Plug-in feels more powerful than the normal Hybrid model. The slim lithium polymer battery pack of the Plug-in is now five times larger than its hybrid counterpart and the electric engine is 32 per cent more powerful, too. Unlike other fuel-friendly cars, the Plug-in feels lively when pressed.

Driving dynamics are typical of the mid-size segment, which is to say it drives easily and sedately. It's not razor sharp like the Mazda6 and skews closer to the Toyota Camry in terms of handling and comfort.

Like our experience in the Sonata Hybrid, the Plug-in is very refined, smooth and quiet. The transition from gas-electric hybrid mobility from pure EV is hardly noticeable and the regenerative brakes aren't overly grabby.

Not just a toy or proof of concept, the Sonata Plug-in Hybrid is fully featured.

THE CHECKLIST | 2016 HYUNDAI SONATA PLUG-IN HYBRID

THE BASICS

Engine: 2.0L four-cylinder paired to a electric motor, making a combined 202 hp
Transmission: Six-speed automatic
CAN Fuel Economy (L/100 km): 5.9 combined in hybrid mode, 2.5 in PHEV mode. Electric range of 35 km
Price: Starts at $45,914

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Ex Top Gear host's worst cars list

IN BRIEF

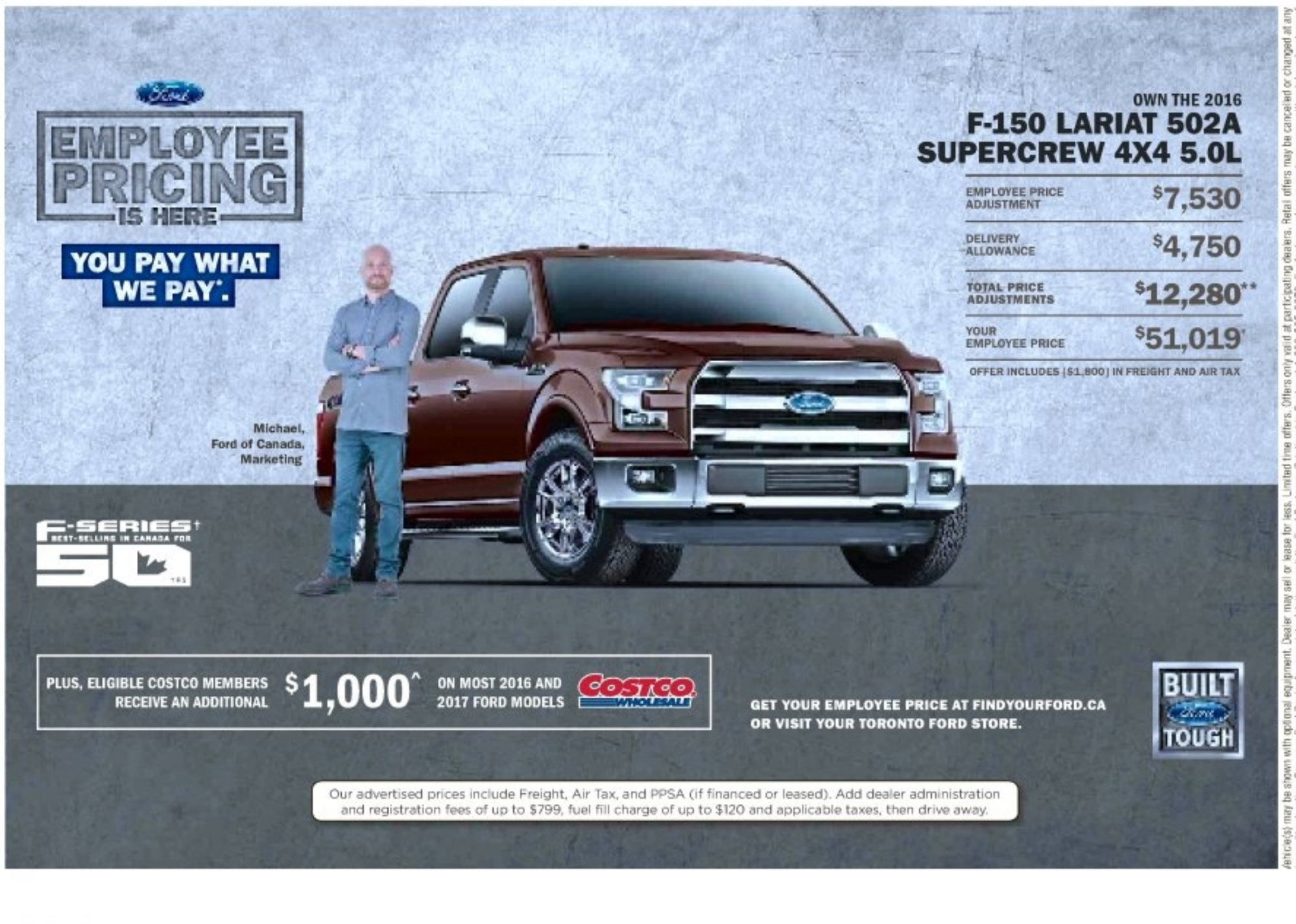
Chevy Colorado gets power bump
Chevrolet is updating the drivetrain in its midsize Colorado pickup truck, adding a new eight-speed automatic transmission and an updated 3.6-litre V6 engine. While the displacement remains the same, the new 3.6-litre features some updates to its variable valve timing and direct injection systems, helping it net 308 horsepower at 4,000 rpm. New for this year is also cylinder deactivation, allowing the engine to cut two cylinders while travelling on the highway to increase fuel economy.
The other major update is the addition of an eight-speed automatic transmission. STEPHEN ELMER/ AUTOGUIDE.COM

WHEELS ROUNDUP
News driving the auto industry brought to you by AutoGuide.com

VAUXHALL ASTRA

Jeremy Clarkson's least favourite

After revealing his Top 10 Star Cars, Jeremy Clarkson has now done the opposite. The former host of Top Gear has listed his stinkers, cars that he just absolutely did not enjoy driving in the last year or so. Despite having a 1.6-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine with 197 horsepower, Clarkson didn't have much nice to say about the Vauxhall Astra, for example. "I still had to cobble together some thoughts on the Vauxhall ... It was red and turbocharged and it would be fine for anyone who needed four wheels and a place to sit down when moving out. And now I'm out of space, which is probably a good thing, because I have nothing else to say about it."
JASON SIU/AUTOGUIDE.COM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New Spyder lives up to its reputation

DREAM CAR

Huracán most accessible car in Lambo lineup

Sami Haj-Assaad
AutoGuide.com

During Monterey Car Week, all sorts of fancy and unique cars come out to play. Limited edition Ferraris, pristine classics and ultra exclusive boutique luxury cars are as common here as taxi cabs in New York.

It's the kind of scene that can make you numb to "normal" exotics, but fortunately, I was given a nice adrenaline shot in the form of a 2016 Lamborghini Huracán LP 610-4 Spyder.

The Huracán is the least expensive, most accessible car in the Lamborghini lineup. As a huge part in the automaker's strategy to increase sales, it starts at around $200,000 U.S. for the less powerful, rear-wheel drive LP 580-2. Our Huracán Spyder managed to ring in at $287,225 U.S. and had a number of important features including the navigation package (because I was in unfamiliar parts of Carmel Valley), the carbon ceramic brakes (a car this fast needs excellent, consistent brakes), the lifting kit, and rear view camera and parking system (because you don't want to scratch this Italian beauty on any speed bumps). It also includes Apple Car Play.

The 2016 Lamborghini Huracán LP 610-4 Spyder looks not unlike a fighter jet with the canopy retracted when its roof is down. MANJUNATH KIRAN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

In the world of exotics where every unnecessary button, detail or feature adds weight and detracts from the "pure" driving experience of a car, these items are luxuries, but are much-needed, as even a Chevrolet Spark can arrive with a standard smartphone-powered navigation system and reversing camera. The Lamborghini feels worth its price in terms of amenities.

And, yes, including these features is something Lamborghini buyers actually appreciate. When the Huracán was introduced, the brand crested 3,000 sales across its lineup for the first time. When the long-awaited Urus SUV arrives, it will surely bump that number up even further.

AT A GLANCE

Engine
5.2-litre V10

Power
610 hp, 57 kg/m of torque

Transmission
Seven-speed dual clutch

Drop-dead gorgeous droptop

Give credit to the styling and design of the LP610-4 Spyder — a car that, while we stopped for photos and videos at a scenic outlook, caused motorists to double back and get a closer look at the car, rather than the scenery.

While the Huracán is a looker, it's even more interesting to look at with the roof down, like a fighter jet with the canopy retracted. The soft top barely saw the sunlight while we were driving, but it did elicit "oohs" and "aahs" as the Huracán did its best Transformer impression. The roof disappears in 17 seconds, accompanied by a symphony of mechanical whirrs.

While the roof is tucked away, you may worry that wind noise would be a concern, but all those angles and the low-slung body of this exotic helps deflect wind nicely.

The beast within

The engine sounds brilliant, and each press of the throttle rewards you with a beautiful, addictive growl.

The power delivery is smooth and instant, which is much appreciated in this world of peaky, laggy turbocharged engines. The ability to eke out so much power from this engine is impressive, too, with the 610 horsepower busting the 100 hp per liter benchmark.

Does it need more? I wouldn't know what to do with more power, unless I had a big track all to myself.

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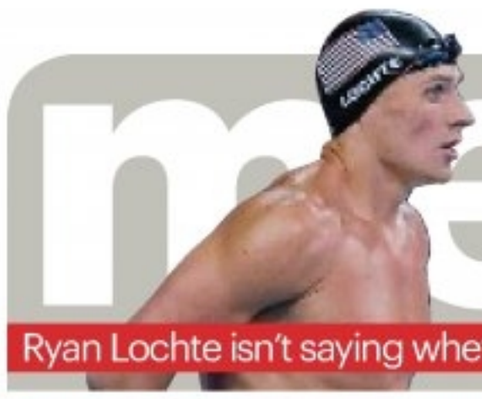

Ryan Lochte isn't saying whether he'll return to Brazil to face a charge of filing a false police report over a gas station incident during the Olympics

Matt Wieters of the Orioles is congratulated by Manny Machado after hitting a two-run homer off of Blue Jays reliever Jason Grilli on Tuesday. MITCHELL LAYTON/GETTY IMAGES

Wieters grills cheese leading O's over Jays

MLB

Catcher comes through with winning homer in 8th inning

TUESDAY In Baltimore

5	3
ORIOLES	BLUE JAYS

Matt Wieters hit a go-ahead, two-run homer off Jason Grilli in the eighth inning to lead the Baltimore Orioles to a 5-3 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday night.

The Orioles pulled within three games of the first-place Blue Jays, who had a four-game winning streak snapped. After losing the opener 5-1, the Orioles will look to gain more ground in the series finale Wednesday.

The Boston Red Sox — second place in the AL East — remain two games behind Toronto after losing to the Tampa Bay Rays 4-3 on Tuesday.

Michael Saunders drilled a two-run shot off Orioles starter Ubaldo Jimenez that tied the game 3-3 in the seventh.

In the eighth, Jonathan Schoop walked and Wieters homered off Grilli (4-2), his 12th of the season.

Brad Brach (8-2) picked up the win with 1-1/3 scoreless innings. Zach Britton got his league-leading 39th save.

Blue Jays left-hander J.A. Happ fell short of tying Boston's Rick Porcello for the major-league lead with 18 wins. Happ allowed three runs and six hits with three strikeouts over 6-1/3 innings.

Manny Machado hit his 34th homer of the season and 100th of his career for Baltimore. Steve Pearce went deep for the 13th time this season.

Aaron Sanchez (12-2, 2.99 ERA) will be recalled from Class-A Dunedin to start fro the Jays on Wednesday. He spent the past 10 days in the minors to limit his innings.

Yovani Gallardo (4-6, 5.59 ERA) will toe the rubber for the Orioles. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

Raps to play Dubs in Vancouver

Stephen Curry and the star-studded Golden State Warriors will take on the Toronto Raptors in a pre-season game in Vancouver as part of the annual NBA Canada Series.

The game, which will also mark the Warriors debut of superstar Kevin Durant, will take place Oct. 1 as part of the Raptors' preparations for the 2016-17 season.

Toronto, featuring the all-star guard combo of DeMar DeRozan and Kyle Lowry, will also face the Denver Nuggets in Calgary on Oct. 3.

This will be the third straight season that Toronto plays an exhibition game in Vancouver. Last season the Raptors beat the Los Angeles Clippers 93-73 at Rogers Arena behind 26 points from Lowry.

The game in Calgary will feature the pre-season debut of Canadian guard Jamal Murray, who was selected seventh overall by the Nuggets at the 2016 draft. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver will get the first look at Stephen Curry, left, and Kevin Durant on the same team. GETTY IMAGES

U.S. OPEN

Bouchard bounced out in first round

Canadian tennis star Eugenie Bouchard made an early exit from the U.S Open after losing 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 to Katerina Siniakova on Tuesday in New York.

Bouchard appeared to struggle with her serve in the third set after having her foot bandaged during a medical timeout. The native of Westmount, Que., was broken three times by Siniakova in the final set.

Overall, Siniakova had 19 break-point opportunities in the match. Bouchard saved 15 of them.

"I feel like I didn't play really well," Bouchard said. "My opponent played really well, I think. I tried my best, I fought my hardest so I have no regrets in that sense. But I wish I had better feeling on the court and served better."

Eugenie Bouchard GETTY IMAGES

The early exit was another setback for Bouchard, who hasn't been able to find her form consistently since the 2014 season that saw her make the Wimbledon final and reach her peak ranking of No. 4 in the world.

At last year's U.S. Open, Bouchard withdrew from her fourth-round match due to a concussion. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Boatmen wary of Lions' return game

The Toronto Argonauts will be leaning heavily on kicker/punter Lirim Hajrullahu on Wednesday as they try to contain the B.C. Lions' dangerous return game.

Toronto (4-4) hosts B.C. (6-3) looking for its first win in three games and just its second this season at BMO Field. And with Lions star Chris Rainey leading the CFL in punt returns (17.8-yard average, two TDs), Argos head coach Scott Milanovich feels Hajrullahu's directional punting will be a crucial factor for the Double Blue.

15.4

B.C. leads the CFL in punt returns with an average of 15.4 yards.

"He's scary," Milanovich said of Rainey. "He does a great job of finding a seam straight up the field and once that happens it opens up the entire field for him.

"Our guys are really going to have to run and understand their responsibilities in their lanes. That's common sense but Lirim has a huge part in that as far as putting our guys in situations where they don't have to cover the 65-yard width of the field." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

DeVos to head up Canada Soccer's development

Former Canadian international Jason deVos has been named Canada Soccer's director of development.

In the newly created role, deVos will be responsible for the overall management, direction and development of coaching and grassroots development programs across Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bridgewater dislocates knee, tears ACL

The Minnesota Vikings say quarterback Teddy Bridgewater will miss at least this season after suffering a dislocated left knee and complete tear to his ACL.

The Vikings made the announcement on Tuesday night, hours after Bridgewater went down in practice and rode an ambulance to a local hospital. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Not just survival without Seba

MLS

TFC is looking at loss of MVP as a 'challenge' to get better

Laurie Wilson
Metro | Toronto

Maybe it should be a mantra for top-level soccer on this continent or at least in this town: never let yourself get too high.

Toronto FC and its fans should certainly be familiar with the refrain.

The Reds were on an unprecedented run of good form going into Saturday's match against the Montreal Impact with six wins in seven unbeaten games and a grip on top spot in the Eastern Conference after Wednesday's win in Orlando.

Leave it to TFC's arch nemesis to crash the short-lived party as Toronto fell to a deflating 1-0 defeat despite facing a 10-man Impact for the entire second half after Calum Mallace's 43rd-minute red card.

"The frustrating part about losing a derby is you let a lot of people down in the process," TFC midfielder Will Johnson said after training at Downsview Park on Tuesday. "You'd rather learn those lessons against somebody other than Montreal and especially not at home, and especially not in front of a sell-out crowd."

Add to that setback the loss of Sebastian Giovinco for up to four weeks due to quadriceps and adductor injuries and you could forgive fans for feeling twinges of the old sky-is-falling feeling ingrained through years of traumatic results.

Regardless, TFC manager Greg Vanney isn't ducking for cover. His roster has pulled together to weather key absences due to injury and international duty throughout the season and he believes they're equipped to do so again without Giovinco.

Vanney's best-case scenario would be for players like Jordan Hamilton, Tosaint Ricketts and the Reds' stable of young midfielders to take on responsibility and create a more-balanced team for Giovinco to return to. One that doesn't need to push everything through the MVP from Turin, Italy to get goals.

"Nobody can pull off a play like Seba can pull off a play and nobody can change a game in this league like Seba can change a game," Vanney said. "So we'll have to do it from a team perspective which is great. It's a challenge for our group to do that because then when you slide Sebastian back in, it becomes a good thing to have gone through that moment once or twice."

> **"I've talked about it from Day 1 in pre-season, our mentality is to be difficult to play against.**
> TFC centre back Drew Moor

And talk of a deep playoff push hasn't been muted by injury gloom either. After all, TFC still sits atop the East and within shouting distance of the Supporters' Shield.

"Everybody believes we can still be a winning club while Sebastian gets fit," Johnson said. "And hopefully he's ready for the more important games in September, October, November and maybe even December."

Maybe there are more highs to come yet.

Sebastian Giovinco left the field Saturday after a tackle from Kyle Bekker in the 67th minute. FRED THORNHILL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

INJURY NOTES

- Vanney left open the possibility that Giovinco could return to the side sooner than the scheduled four weeks but made it clear the club will take the long view.

"We hope that it could be shorter than that but we're not going to rush this or anything. We have big-picture things in front of us in terms of playoffs."

- Vanney said goalkeeper Clint Irwin looked "physically comfortable" after practising on Tuesday.

The 27-year-old saw his first game action in more than two months in a USL match Sunday.

"Now it's just a matter of more training time and match minutes that will continue to get him sharper," Vanney said.

With Alex Bono filling in admirably, Vanney said the goalkeeping situation will be reassessed before the Reds' next game on Sept. 10 at Chicago.

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RECIPE Better Than Classic Tuna Melt

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

The additions of apple and pickle to this tuna melt give it a twist of great texture and surprising flavour.

Ready in 20 minutes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients
- 2 whole wheat pita breads
- 1 can tuna
- 1/3 cup diced Granny Smith apple
- 1/3 cup diced celery
- 1/8 cup diced cornichon or dill pickle
- 1 Tbsp mayonnaise
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup grated cheddar

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

2. In a large bowl, mix together the tuna, apple celery, pickle and mayo until it is well combined. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Spread mixture across pitas. Leave a small border around edge the way you do with pizza — it makes it easier to pick up and eat.

4. Sprinkle the cheese evenly across both pitas. Place the pitas on a baking sheet.

5. Pop in the hot oven for about 10 minutes until the cheese is completely melted and the edges of the pitas are toasty brown.

6. Remove from oven and cool for a couple of minutes before cutting each pita into quarters.

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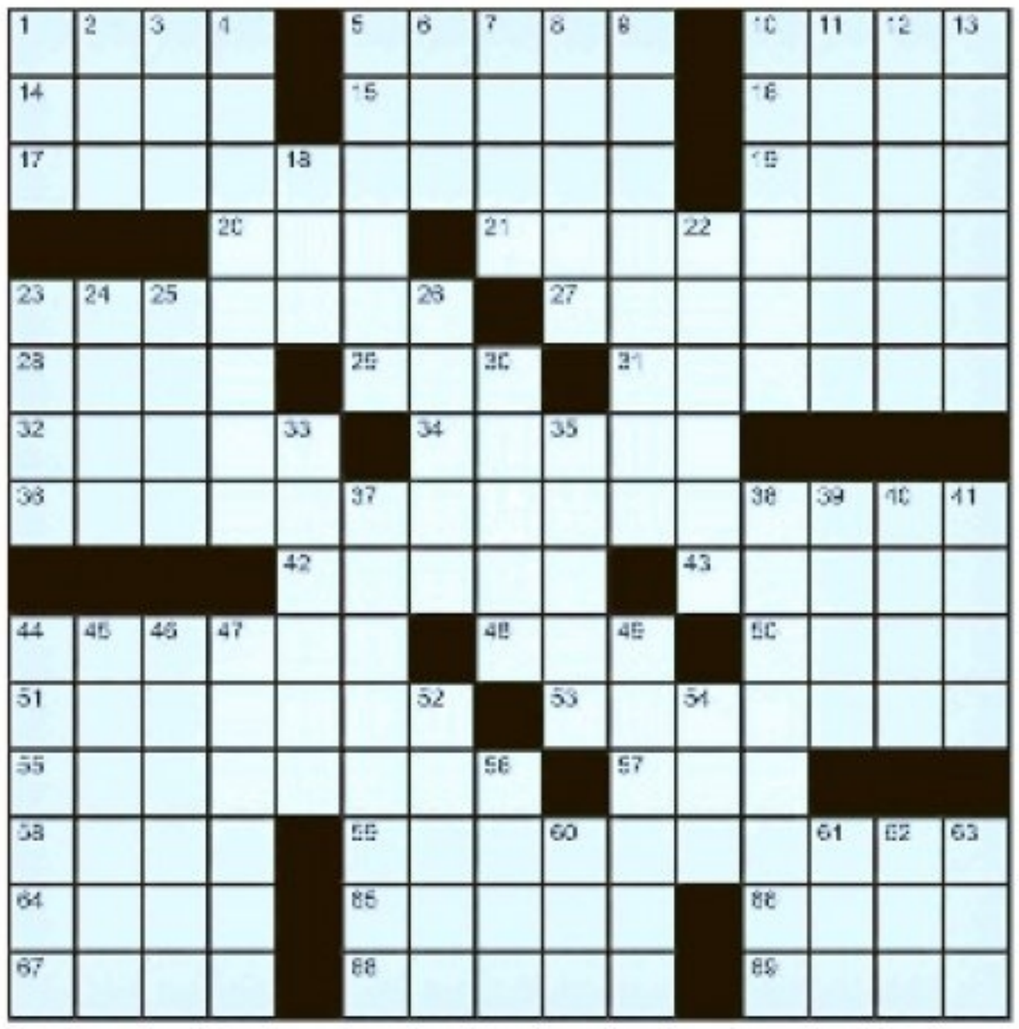
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Taunt
5. The _ (1973) starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford
10. _ _. Wade
14. Person, place or thing
15. Bag carrier
16. Norse epic
17. Decipher a secret message
19. Prefix with 'algia'
20. Abner of comics
21. Refinement
23. Astronomical observatory site in California, _ Mountain
27. Signs up for the military
28. Eye part
29. Eur. country
31. Nan A. _ (Book publisher)
32. Keanu Reeves/Sandra Bullock movie
34. Administered, as medication
36. One of the islands of Iles de la Madeleine in Quebec that's a 'Haven-of-Houses'
42. Leg bone
43. American _ (Pago Pago's land)
44. Infamous movie of 1987
48. Yore
50. Wines: French
51. Sort of close by
53. Binds, surgeon-style
55. Hurt by a barb
57. Singer, Priscilla _
58. Mal de _ (Headache, in French)
59. The Allman Brothers Band's "_ ' _"
64. Frosts
65. Still _ _ (Maya Angelou poem)
66. First-rate
67. Brewer's kiln
68. Like many a window
69. Dispatched

DOWN
1. Wildebeest
2. Lithium-_ battery
3. Commuter's ride
4. One placing something in with the letter in the envelope
5. _ 17 (1953) starring William Holden
6. Mr. Cruise
7. Let _ _ by The Beatles
8. Writer Harper Lee's birth name, _ Harper Lee
9. Beneficial brewed/boiling beverage: 2 wds.
10. Hammer once more
11. Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen's birthplace
12. Inferences
13. Province in Italy's Lombardy area
18. Crater's edge
22. Michael _ (Portrayer of Paul Kinsey on Mad Men)
23. Cousin of 'Pshaw!'
24. Italian harp
25. Mr. Schreiber
26. Fix the movie soundtrack work
30. Ms. Roker of The Jeffersons
33. Attention to _
35. Little
37. Temporary runway
38. Gazelle's grasslands
39. Miss
40. Not any
41. Flippant talk
44. Ab _ (Latin for 'from the beginning')
45. And Muzak filled the air / From _ to Cuyahoga Falls. - The Pretenders, My City Was Gone
46. Rushings
47. Most honest
49. Used a phone number
52. I _ _ Symphony by The Supremes
54. 4's phone letters
56. Music key, _ _.
60. Mad Cow Disease letters
61. Curly's pal
62. Heart sister of Rock
63. Bring in

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Silly errors and delays at work will be frustrating for the next few weeks because Mercury is retrograde. Just grin and bear it. What else can you do?

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Old flames are back in your life, which might be fun or horrific. Creative projects will be slow to get off the ground. Past issues with children might resurface.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Because your ruler Mercury is retrograde, family might be camped on your doorstep and eating you out of house and home. This will continue for several weeks. Have courage.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Just accept the fact that the next month will be full of mistakes, transportation delays and misplaced items. You're not losing it, and this is only temporary. You will survive.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Use the next few weeks to wrap up old money issues and deal with loose ends. Money that is coming to you might be late in the mail or delayed. Grrrr.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Mercury is retrograde in your sign now, which hasn't happened for a few years. This brings people from your past, especially ex-partners, back into your world.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It is Mercury retrograde now, which is frustrating for many signs. However, for Libras, you have a great chance to do research and find answers to old problems.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Friends from the past are back in your life again. This could be reassuring, because it's always nice to have history with others.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Some of you might be in touch with parents or authority figures you haven't seen for a while. You also might be able to successfully pitch an old idea to a boss.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Travel plans might be delayed or canceled because of Mercury retrograde. If traveling, it will be easiest to go someplace you have been before.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Use the next few weeks to wrap up loose ends regarding shared property, taxes, inheritances and debt issues. It will be surprisingly easy to do this.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Issues with ex-partners are back on your plate again. In fact, some of you will be running into ex-partners! Might this be an opportunity for closure?

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

		7	6		1	5		
	8						2	
6				5				8
1								4
		4		3		2		
3								9
7				1				5
	6						3	
		8	4		9	7		

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Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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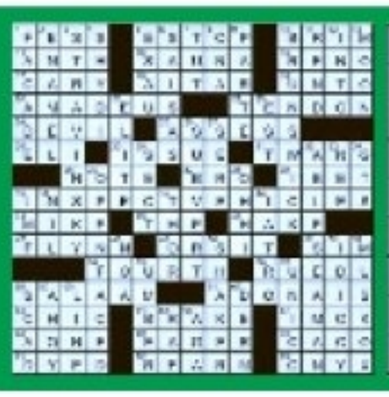

2	6	3	8	4	1	7	9	5
9	1	7	5	3	6	2	4	8
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6	8	9	1	7	3	5	2	4
1	2	5	4	6	8	3	7	9
8	4	1	6	5	2	9	3	7
7	3	2	9	8	4	1	5	6
5	9	6	3	1	7	4	8	2

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